

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 1999, the City of San José began a strategic planning process to assess community needs for therapeutic recreation and human services, and engage residents and service partners in mapping a plan for the future.

The City of San José Office of Therapeutic Services has provided recreation opportunities that have enriched the lives of individuals with disabilities since 1972. Services and facilities are now used by approximately 3,000-4,000 San Jose residents annually. The need for therapeutic recreation services, however, is much greater. Today, the facilities used by therapeutic services are fully programmed with waiting lists. The number of programs and participants is limited by budgetary and facility constraints.

The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to:

- Define both services and recreation facilities needed to meet the needs of individuals with a range of disabilities;
- Define a model for future service delivery;

- Provide a 20-year Strategic Plan to guide the development of facilities, therapeutic recreation programs, and services for people with disabilities;
- Identify corresponding funding and staffing requirements for years one through ten; and
- Develop a design concept for a new, state-of-the-art recreation and wellness facility for people of all abilities in San Jose.

Close to 100 community members participated in the development of this Strategic Plan. This process provided the community, partner agencies, and staff with an opportunity to identify comprehensive service needs, priorities, and new partnership opportunities for expanding therapeutic recreation services.

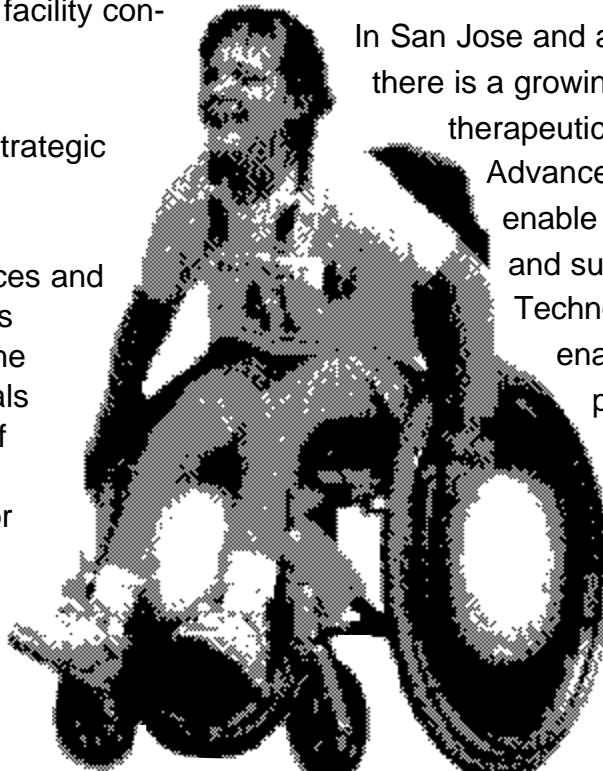
Need

In San Jose and across the country, there is a growing need for therapeutic recreation services.

Advances in medical care enable people to live longer and survive traumatic injuries.

Technology and accessibility enable people to live inde-

pendently. The goal of public schools is to educate children with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers.



Employers are beginning to make “reasonable accommodations” to add people with disabilities to their work-force; and theaters, ball parks, cruise ships, campsites and local parks are accessible. These positive changes have welcomed children, adults and elders with disabilities into all aspects of society. Community therapeutic recreation provides an opportunity for people of all abilities to increase understanding, strengthen health, maintain wellness and independence, and develop a stronger community together. Several facts indicate the need for additional services:

- *Many San Jose residents with disabilities are not receiving services.* According to 1990 U.S. Census data, and the County Office of Education nearly 65,000 San Jose residents are disabled. Therapeutic Services provides programs for 3,000 to 4,000 persons annually.
- *Therapeutic recreation provides cost savings to individuals and society.* Community-based recreation services help people with disabilities remain independent, and can be provided at a much lower cost than institutionalization.
- *Demand for health and wellness programs is growing.* Managed health care has greatly reduced the length of stay for persons rehabilitating from surgery and catastrophic injuries. As local government recreation and park agencies become more centrally

involved in health care, a major issue will be long-term health promotion and maintenance. Geoffery Godbey, proposes that the progression in recovery from a major health event may be: injury, illness, medical treatment, clinical rehabilitation, community-based health promotion sponsored by parks and recreation and, finally, parks and recreation participation (Parks and Recreation, October 1999).

- *The aging population will increase the demand for services significantly.* In 1990, individuals age 60 and over made up 12.2% of the population. By 2020, as the baby boom generation ages, there will be a 70% increase in the number of people 60 years of age and over. California Department of Aging estimates that 12% of those individuals over 65 have a mobility limitation or a self-care limitation, or both (United Way Trends Report). As the population ages, there will be more people who live with chronic health issues, such as arthritis, post-stroke, Parkinson's disease, and cardiac conditions.
- *A continuum of services is needed to fully address community needs.* The abilities and skills of individuals with disabilities vary greatly. A continuum of services from inclusive programs to specialized programs is needed.

- *Specialized facilities are often needed for recreation programs serving individuals with disabilities.* To meet all community needs, all existing recreation facilities should be renovated in accordance with Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines. In addition, a facility designed specifically for those with disabilities is needed to meet specialized health and wellness needs of all of the groups described above.

This continuum of service--offering services at every level from a safe, protective, non-integrated to a totally inclusive integrated setting in the community--allows for individuals with disabilities to choose their level of recreation participation. This will ensure that San Jose residents with disabilities have adequate opportunities to preserve and improve wellness.

Vision for Therapeutic Recreation

Community residents, representatives from partner agencies, and staff created a vision for future services. The City's therapeutic services vision, mission, goals, and strategies were refined by the Strategic Plan, Services for Persons with Disabilities, Steering Committee and Advisory Board. These elements provide a strategic framework for enhancing therapeutic recreation services to the San Jose community.

The vision describes the preferred future for San Jose, which is supported by the Office of Therapeutic Services and its

partners' programs, services, and facilities.

The vision for the future is:



To thrive as individuals and as a larger society, people must feel connected to others around them in positive ways. This is especially important to people with disabilities, who may feel isolated and are often excluded because of architectural or attitudinal barriers. Recreation opportunities foster community connection, both in spirit and in activities. Recreation also promotes wellness, boosting physical, mental and emotional well-being.

The mission describes the primary purpose of the strategic plan services for people with disabilities:



Eight goals were developed during the strategic planning process:

- A. Improve health and fitness
- B. Enhance independence
- C. Improve social skills
- D. Increase self-esteem
- E. Connect people and families with community resources
- F. Provide opportunities to contribute to society
- G. Promote community integration
- H. Promote play, hope and joy

The following seven strategies will guide the provision of future therapeutic recreation and related human services and describe ways to accomplish the above stated goals:

- 1. Increase community outreach and participation in therapeutic recreation
- 2. Expand specialized programs for people with disabilities
- 3. Enhance inclusion in existing Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services programs and facilities
- 4. Ensure that the needs of disabled persons are considered in all City and neighborhood planning efforts
- 5. Develop a recreation and wellness facility that will serve as a "hub" for therapeutic recreation programs
- 6. Enhance staffing levels and capabilities to deliver quality services for people with disabilities

- 7. Maintain maximum organizational efficiency to deliver services to people with disabilities

Service Delivery Model

A new service delivery model is required to fully address the therapeutic recreation needs of San Jose residents. This new model identifies program and service needs and the location of services for the convenience and benefit of San Jose residents. By enhancing services and facilities and by collaborating with key community partners, the City of San José will be well-positioned to serve the varied needs of its expanding population.

Core Services

The following programs and services for people with disabilities will be provided by the Office of Therapeutic Services, other City departments, and partner agencies:

Programs

- Aquatics
- Health/fitness/sports
- Independent living skills
- Employment-related skills
- Socialization/recreation
- Performing arts
- "Reverse mainstreaming"

Services

- Transportation
- Transition services for persons leaving hospitals, schools, and other recreation programs
- Mentoring
- Inclusion
- Information and referral

- Counseling
- Volunteer program

Program Locations

Multiple program locations are needed to achieve the mission and expand services to individuals with disabilities. To provide a continuum of services, a variety of facility types and locations are required. The new service delivery model recommends three types of facilities:

- *Community Facilities* - Facilities that serve the general community and integrate people with disabilities into community recreation activities.
- *Recreation and Wellness Center* - A multi-purpose facility designed specifically to meet the needs of people with disabilities and also serving a wide range of San Jose residents.
- *Specialized Facilities* - Small facilities designed to meet the needs of specific population groups, such as people with mental illness.

Partnerships

Partnerships and collaborations with others are seen as key resources for development and operation of the Recreation and Wellness Center and expanded therapeutic recreation programs throughout the City of San José. Current and potential categories of “partners” include:

- Schools
- Small businesses and corporations
- Government agencies

- Community-based organizations
- Colleges and universities
- Transportation agencies
- Medical community
- City of San José departments
- Redevelopment Agency

Recreation and Wellness Center

The Recreation and Wellness Center will provide a state-of-the-art fitness and community center to serve the needs of San Jose residents with disabilities. It will include therapeutic aquatic pools and a gym and fitness center, as well as classrooms for recreation and training, and areas for relaxing and interaction.

The Recreation and Wellness Center will be the "hub" for therapeutic services programs. It will also serve as a community center and meeting place for the general community.

The Recreation and Wellness Center could be an opportunity for collaboration and partnerships, as well as a catalyst for redevelopment of surrounding neighborhoods. The size of the Recreation and Wellness Center will be determined by the square footage standards established in the City's plan for its multi-service centers, with additional space required to accommodate the accessibility guidelines and staff-to-client ratios necessary to provide safe and effective programs. It is recommended that it be located near a light rail transportation corridor to allow easy access by public transportation.

Cost Estimates and Funding Plan

Estimated development and construction costs for the Recreation and Wellness Center are \$23,584,100. These costs are based on preliminary facility needs identified by staff and the community. Once a site is selected, the type and range of components may change based on site constraints. Similarly, development and construction costs may change as the project becomes more defined.

Annual operating and maintenance costs for the Recreation and Wellness Center, excluding staffing, have been calculated, based on the facility size and functional use. The total annual operations and maintenance cost is estimated to be \$585,744. This includes labor, utilities, materials and other direct costs needed to operate and maintain the Center. The City of San Jose has several funding sources used to fund parks and community facility capital improvements including Construction and Conveyance Taxes, joint use agreements, and the City's General Fund. The proposed Recreation and Wellness Center may qualify for many of the traditional funding sources and attract new, creative partnership opportunities. Private foundations and grants, such as Community Development Block Grants, should be a good source of additional funding for the new facility and start up operations costs.

Staffing Plan

Additional staffing will be required to implement the new therapeutic recreation service delivery model. Program and staffing enhancements will be phased in incrementally over the next ten years. Currently 27 full-time equivalency (FTE) Office of Therapeutic Services staff provide programs and services. By 2010, an additional 39.5 FTEs are required to staff the new centralized Recreation and Wellness Center as well as expand services at specialized facilities and multi-service community centers.

Performance Measures

To help the City of San Jose assess progress toward goals, Investing in Results performance measures will continue to be used. These measures and those newly developed will be linked to each of the eight goals in the Strategic Plan, and will be used to evaluate successful Strategic Plan implementation. Implementing the measures will require the development of data collection and reporting methodologies and practices. As these measures are implemented, the City's therapeutic services will build a database of information, providing feedback on the success of each strategy, while guiding future planning decisions.